

What is claimed is:

1. A database unload method, comprising:  
receiving a request to extract data from a database table, the database table having a current version associated with a current schema of the database table and a prior version associated with a prior schema of the database table, the request directed the prior version; and  
extracting data from the database table based on the table schema associated with the prior version.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of receiving a request further comprises obtaining schema definition information associated with the database table.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the act of obtaining schema definition information comprises obtaining schema definition information for the prior version.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the act of obtaining schema definition information further comprises obtaining schema definition information for versions associated with the database table in addition to the prior version.

5. The method of claim 2, wherein the act of obtaining schema definition information comprises receiving said schema definition information from a user.
6. The method of claim 2, wherein the act of obtaining schema definition information comprises receiving said schema definition from a database change management application.
7. The method of claim 2, wherein the act of obtaining schema definition information comprises receiving said schema definition information directly from a database management system.
8. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of extracting data comprises unloading data stored in the database table to a result set data structure.
9. The method of claim 8, wherein the result set data structure comprises a computer file.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of extracting data comprises generating a file that encodes therein a definition of the schema associated with the prior version.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of extracting data comprises:  
unloading a datum from the database table, said datum having a first format;  
and  
transforming the unload datum to a second format.

12. The method of claim 1, wherein the act of extracting data comprises:  
identifying a row in the database table;  
determining a version associated with the identified row; and  
extracting data from the identified row in accordance with the determined version.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the acts of identifying, determining and extracting are repeated for each row in the database table.

14. A program storage device, readable by a programmable control device, comprising instructions stored on the program storage device for causing the programmable control device to:

receive a request to extract data from a database table, the database table having a current version associated with a current schema of the database table and a prior version associated with a prior schema of the database table, the request directed the prior version; and

extract data from the database table based on the table schema associated with the prior version.

15. The program storage device method of claim 14, wherein the instructions to receive a request further comprise instructions to obtain schema definition information associated with the database table.

16. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the instructions to obtain schema definition information comprise instructions to obtain schema definition information for the prior version.

17. The program storage device of claim 16, wherein the instructions to obtain schema definition information further comprise instructions to obtain schema definition information for versions associated with the database table in addition to the prior version.

18. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the instructions to obtain schema definition information comprise instructions to receive said schema definition information from a user.

19. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein the instructions to obtain schema definition information comprise instructions to receive said schema definition from a database change management application.

20. The program storage device of claim 15, wherein instructions to obtain schema definition information comprise instructions to receive said schema definition information directly from a database management system.

21. The program storage device of claim 14, wherein the instructions to extract data comprise instructions to unload data stored in the database table to a result set data structure.

22. The program storage device of claim 21, wherein the instructions to unload data to a result set data structure comprise instructions to unload data to a computer file.

23. The program storage device of claim 14, wherein the instructions to extract data comprise instructions to generate a file that encodes therein a definition of the schema associated with the prior version.

24. The program storage device of claim 14, wherein the instructions to extract data comprise instructions to:

unload a datum from the database table, said datum having a first format; and  
transform the unload datum to a second format.

25. The program storage device of claim 14, wherein the instructions to extract data comprise instructions to:

identify a row in the database table;

determine a version associated with the identified row; and

extract data from the identified row in accordance with the determined version.

26. The program storage device of claim 25, wherein the instructions to identify, determine and extract are repeated for each row in the database table.

27. A relational database data-unload command, comprising:

a table-identifier to identify a table in a relation database from which to unload data;

a version-identifier to identify a version of the table identified by the table-identifier the data-unload command is to be executed against.

28. The relational database data-unload command of claim 27, further comprising one or more column-identifiers to specify the columns to unload from the table identified by the table-identifier.

29. The relational database data-unload command of claim 28, further comprising one or more transformation-identifiers to specify a function to apply to a datum unloaded from a specified column of the table identified by the table-identifier.

30. A computer system, comprising:

a central processing unit;

first storage operatively coupled to the central processing unit, the first storage having stored therein at least a portion of a relational database table; and

second storage operatively coupled to the central processing unit and the first storage, the second storage having stored therein at least a portion of a database management system, the database management system adapted to -

receive a request to extract data from the relational database table, the relational database table having a current version associated with a current schema of the relational database table and a prior version associated with a prior schema of the relational database table, the request directed the prior version, and

extract data from the relational database table based on the table schema associated with the prior version.